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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to increase grade four students' reading motivation by helping them to develop a broader awareness of literary genres, and through participation in literature-based discussion activities. Approximately 71 students and 33 teachers participated. The following interventions were used: creating a literature rich classroom, conducting a reading interest survey, introducing a variety of genres, and book buddy discussion activities. The final outcome was that the students' motivation to read increased. The literature supported three main themes. One theme was that students who lack motivation do not take responsibility for their learning experience. Another theme was that reading skills are linked to the amount of time spent reading. Finally, basic skill training is still necessary beyond fourth grade, and if children are unmotivated and not reading successfully by fourth grade, they are likely to remain poor readers. The literature provided a variety of strategies to foster students' reading interest, and for this project, the following three were chosen. One strategy was using bibliotherapy to offer children a reference for their feelings about reading. Another strategy was to encourage literary discussion by creating a "book buddy" system. Finally, researchers created a goal-oriented program that incorporated literature-based activities to encourage reading interest. Having completed the interventions and data comparisons, the researchers concluded that there was an increase in students' reading motivation. The data was based on the pre-and post-intervention student interest surveys and the pre- and post-intervention activity choice measurements. Appendixes contain a reading tally sheet; a survey and a questionnaire; a 16-item annotated bibliography of children's literature; a reading log; book buddy interview questions; a book buddy lesson plan; and lesson plans and recording sheets for a "Novel Reflections" and "Current Events" activities. (Contains 57 references, 11 tables, and 22 figures.) (Author/RS)

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CS CSTR 0121

USING LITERATURE TO INCREASE READING MOTIVATION

ED 481 442

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School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

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Field-Based Master's Program
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to increase students' reading motivation by helping them to develop a broader awareness of literary genres, and through participation in literature-based discussion activities. Approximately 71 students and 33 teachers participated. The following interventions were used: creating a literature rich classroom, conducting a reading interest survey, introducing a variety of genres, and book buddy discussion activities. The final outcome was that the students' motivation to read increased.

The literature supported three main themes. One theme was that students who lack motivation do not take responsibility for their learning experience (Abdullah, n.d. and Ngeow, 1998). Another theme was that reading skills are linked to the amount of time spent reading (Harris, 1991). Finally, basic skill training is still necessary beyond fourth grade, and if children are unmotivated and not reading successfully by fourth grade, they are likely to remain poor readers (Robb, n.d. and National Education Association, n.d.).

The literature provided a variety of strategies to foster students' reading interest, and for this project, the following three were chosen. One strategy was using bibliotherapy to offer children a reference for their feelings about reading (Lu, n.d. and The National Association for Poetry Therapy, 2002). Another strategy was to encourage literary discussion by creating a "book buddy" system (Blue Ribbon Schools, n.d. and The College of St. Scholastica, n.d.). Finally, researchers created a goal-oriented program that incorporated literature-based activities to encourage reading interest (Caldwell, n.d. and Harris, 1991).

Having completed the interventions and data comparisons, the researchers concluded that there was an increase in students' reading motivation. The data was based on the pre-and post-intervention student interest surveys and the pre- and post-intervention activity choice measurements.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

Students in the targeted fourth grade classrooms exhibited a deficiency in reading motivation. Evidence of this problem was demonstrated through anecdotal records (i.e. recording tally sheet) taken while students were being observed during structured activity time, student interest surveys, teacher opinion surveys, and reading log turn-in rates.

Immediate Problem Context

This action research project is being conducted by three teachers/researchers at two sites. Site A is an intermediate school from which two fourth grade classes will participate in this study. Site B is an elementary school from which one fourth grade class will participate. Site A's demographic information follows and was retrieved from the Illinois School Report Card (State of Illinois, *Woodland*, 2001, p. 1).

Site A

Table 1

Racial /Ethnic Background by Percentage and Total Enrollment

	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific	African American	Native American	Enrollment
School	77.7	5.2	8.8	8.2	0.1	1,446
District	75.7	5.3	10.0	8.8	0.2	6,552

Table 1, above, shows that the majority of the students at Site A are predominantly Caucasian. Also, the table shows that the school percentages are reflective of the district percentages. Of the school's total student population, 5.9% were classified as low-income. "Low-income students come from families receiving public aid, live in institutions for neglected

or delinquent children, are supported in foster homes with public funds, or are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches" (State of Illinois, *Woodland*, 2001, p.1). In addition, 3.7% of the students are considered Limited-English-proficient. "Limited-English-proficient students are those students eligible for transitional bilingual programs" (State of Illinois, *Woodland*, 2001, p.1). Table 2 indicates that there is a high attendance rate, little mobility, and very few chronic truants at Site A. These numbers are comparable to the districts' numbers.

Table 2

Attendance, Mobility, and Chronic Truancy by percentage

	Attendance	Mobility	Chronic Truancy
School	95.7	10.0	0.2
District	95.4	11.5	0.2

The school district, of which the targeted site is a part, employs a total of 393 teachers, 88% (n=346) are female and 12% (n=47) are male. Of the 393 teachers working in the district, 59.4% (n=233) have earned Bachelor's Degrees and 40.6% (n=160) have earned a Master's Degree or above. The average teacher salary in the district is $38,062, with the average number of years of teaching experience being nine years. At the elementary level, in the school's district, the pupil-teacher ratio is 19:1. The pupil-certified ratio in the district was 15:1. The pupil-administrator ratio is 243:1. For the academic year 2001-2002, 77% of elementary students met or exceeded the Illinois Learning Standards according to the overall performance on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (State of Illinois, *Woodland*, 2001, p.2).

Table 3

Teacher's Ethnicity by Percentage and Total Enrollment

	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	African American	Native American
District	94.3%	2.7%	1.8%	1.0%	0.3%
State	84.6%	3.6%	0.9%	10.8%	0.1%

Table 3, above, shows that the majority of the teachers at Site A are predominantly Caucasian. Also, the table shows that the state percentages are reflective of the district percentages (State of Illinois, *Woodland*, 2001, p.2).

The Site A school building is a new building completed in August, 2002. The building consists of five teams of fourth and fifth grade students with 12-14 classrooms per team. A team consists of classroom and resource teachers that collaborate together and are located within a designated area of proximity. All of the classrooms and resource rooms are air conditioned with a central air system. In 2000-2001, 42.1% of the school's expenditures were used for instruction, 2% was used for general administration, 32% was used for support services, and 23.8% was used for other expenditures (State of Illinois, *Woodland*, 2001, p.2).

The site has two principals, two assistant principals, one special education coordinator, and one psychologist. It also has 27 fourth grade teachers, 28 fifth grade teachers, three social workers, and six special education resource teachers. There are three mathematics specialists, three reading specialists, five special education assistants, one nurse, two nurse's aids, one librarian, two librarian aids, one administrative assistant, and three secretaries. There are a total of four custodians assigned to the building throughout the school day for general maintenance and specific duties while a separate night crew of approximately five services the evening cleaning routines.

Site B

The information in this section about the elementary school that houses the fourth grade was retrieved from the Illinois School Report Card (State of Illinois, *Antioch*, 2001). Table 4 shows that the 463 students at Site B are predominantly Caucasian, with minorities representing approximately 7% of the population.

Table 4

Racial/Ethnic Background by Percentage and Total Enrollment

	Caucasian	Hispanic	African American	Asian/ Pacific	Native American	Enrollment
School	92.9	4.1	1.5	1.3	0.2	463
District	92.8	3.9	1.4	1.3	0.6	2,152

Low-income students at Site B were 13% of the population. "Low-income students come from families receiving public aid, live in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, are supported in foster homes with public funds, or are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches" (State of Illinois, 2001, *Antioch,* p.1). Other information includes 1.1% of the students are Limited-English-proficient. "Limited-English-proficient students are those students eligible for transitional bilingual programs" (State of Illinois, 2001, *Antioch,* p.1).

Table 5 indicates that there was a high attendance rate, little mobility, and very few chronic truants at Site B. Mobility at this school is almost one-half that of the district.

Table 5

Attendance, Mobility, and Chronic Truancy

	Attendance	Mobility	Chronic Truancy
School	95.4%	8.5%	0.8%
District	94.8%	15.6%	0.7%

The District's teaching staff at Site B totaled 120 full-time teachers, 21% (n=25) were male and 79% (n=95) were female. The average teacher salary is $40,738.00 with the average teaching experience being 12.9 years. Teachers with a Master's Degree and above make up 60% (n=72) of the 100% Caucasian staff. The instructional setting in the district provided a 21:1 staff-to student ratio. The pupil-certified staff ratio was 16:1 and pupil-administrator ratio was 307:1 (State of Illinois, 2001, *Antioch,* p.2).

In 2000-2001, 71% of the students at Site B met or exceeded the Illinois Learning Standards on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (State of Illinois, 2001, *Antioch,* p.3*)*.

The Site B school facility was built in 1980. Originally, the school housed kindergarten through sixth grade students. Currently, the building consists of four second grades, five third grades, and four classrooms each for fourth and fifth grades. In 1999-2000, the expenditures were 42.2% for instruction, 35.4% for support services, 19.4% for other expenditures, and 3% for general administration.

The grade center includes one principal and one full-time secretary with two part-time secretaries. There were 30 certified and 12 non-certified staff members. The center also had a nurse and a full-time social worker.

Site B recently reconfigured their boundaries in 2000 because of growth of the district. A referendum was passed to allow a new pre-kindergarten through first grade facility to be built. The district then re-distributed the second through fifth grade students among the already established elementary schools.

The Surrounding Community

Site A and Site B are located in Lake County, Illinois. Lake County is located an equal distance between Chicago, Illinois and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Demographics for Lake County are detailed in this section.

The population as of the year 2001 was 644,356. There was a 19.7% increase in the population between 1990 and 1999. The median household income is $59,528. According to the 2002 United States Census Bureau, the median population age is 33 years old. Table 6 below shows that the population in Lake County is predominantly Caucasian.

Table 6

Racial/Ethnicity Background by Percentage in Lake County

Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian	African American	Pacific Islander
516,189	99,716	50,210	44,741	616

Lake County has 73.8% of its population in the work force and 26.1% not in the work force of which 5.2% are unemployed. The armed forces employs 4.1% of the 73.8% of Lake County residents and 5.2% of the residents are unemployed. The 2001 crime report states that in 2000 the total crime rate in Lake County was 15,987. In 2001, the rate increased to 16,097. Almost 76% of the Lake County residents have high school diplomas and approximately 24% hold four-year college degrees. The average family size in 2001 was 3.33 persons. In 1999, the median house value was $159,000.

Site A is in a district that includes primary (K-1), elementary (2-3), intermediate (4-5), and middle school (6-8) buildings. The schools in the district house students from parts of eight towns. The mission of this district is to create a community of lifelong learners. The official mission statement is "Learning for a Lifetime" (Woodland, 2001). The district strives to

integrate the use of technology with curriculum throughout its buildings. At Site A, all faculty members have opportunities to raise technology competencies through district in-services and workshops. Every classroom has a computer with access to electronic mail and the Internet. In this district, each building has a minimum of one computer laboratory and each laboratory is connected with the district's mainframe. The assessed valuation of all property, equalized by the State Department of Revenue for the year 2000 for the district is the sum of $1,149,035,668 (Helander, *Woodland*, 2000).

Site B is in a district that includes a primary building (preK-1), three elementary buildings (2-5), and a middle school (6-8). Three communities surround the school district. "The mission of Antioch Community Consolidated School District #34 is to educate our children to become life-long learners by providing a child-centered curriculum that challenges the potential of all learners" (W.C. Petty School, 2002, p2). Site B integrates the use of technology by providing classes for teachers along with providing personal computers within their classrooms. These computers can access electronic mail and the Internet. Computer laboratories are located in all of the buildings for the students. Programs correlated with the mathematics curriculum, along with educational games, are available for the students. The assessed valuation of all property as assessed and equalized by the State Department of Revenue for the year 2000 for Antioch Community Consolidated School District #34 is the sum of $352,541,182 (Helander, *Antioch*, 2000).

The region known as Lake County was created by an Act of State Legislature in March of 1839. The area at that time was primarily prairie and was still the home of its native Pottawatomie Indians. The county's first permanent settler was Captain Daniel Wright who came to Half Day in 1834. The first courthouse was built in Little Fort (now Waukegan) in 1844

at the cost of $4,000. In 1853, south of the courthouse, a building to house the county offices and records was constructed. The courthouse burned down on October 18, 1875 but the county records were saved because they were housed in the other building (Lake County, 2002).

Fifty-two incorporated villages and cities make up Lake County's 470 square miles. The county has 24 miles of the Lake Michigan shoreline and three state parks. Lake County is the home of the Great Lakes Naval Station, Chicago Bulls' Berto Center, Chicago Bears' Halas Hall, Six Flags Great America, and Gurnee Mills. Most locations in the county are within one and one-half hours of the city of Chicago.

National Context of the Problem

Educators have kept the pendulum swinging for decades in an attempt to improve student reading achievement scores. The phonics versus sight vocabulary debate of the past evolved into the more recent phonics versus whole language debate (Robb, n.d.). While many educators have strongly supported one philosophy or the other, some have found that a balanced approach has proven more effective in reaching a variety of ability levels (Burns, 1999, Cantrell, 1999).

Despite the differences in these approaches, the teachers who support them have found areas of common ground. According to a study done by Wolf, "Reading practice was at a minimal level" (as cited in The College of St. Scholastica, n.d., p. 1). "In the primary grades it was revealed that only one-third of the students engaged in reading outside of the classroom" (The College of St. Scholastica, n.d., p. 1). In a study titled, Increasing Literature Based Reading Practice at Home and School, teachers found "...that there was a low level of reading practice taking place both in the home and at school" (The College of St. Scholastica, n.d., p.2). One area of agreement would be that an important component of any literacy program is reading practice. Reading practice is what is necessary to improve basic reading skills. In the Journal of

Adolescent and Adult Literacy, C. A. Kirk states, "The more students read, the better readers they will become (as cited in Coats & Taylor-Clark, 2001). Reading skills affect students' ability to comprehend, think critically, and express their thoughts and opinions orally and in writing."

A second area of agreement would be that the amount of reading a student does often depends on that student's level of motivation. Reading improvement research done by Guthrie and Alao (as cited in Abdullah, n.d.) corroborates the findings of the "Niche Reading" study done by Coats and Taylor in 2001. Both cases indicated that motivation is an important factor in getting students to read and comprehend what they read. "Innovative principals across the nation are striving to raise reading achievement for all students in their schools" (Blue Ribbon Schools: How Principals Promote Reading, n.d.).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

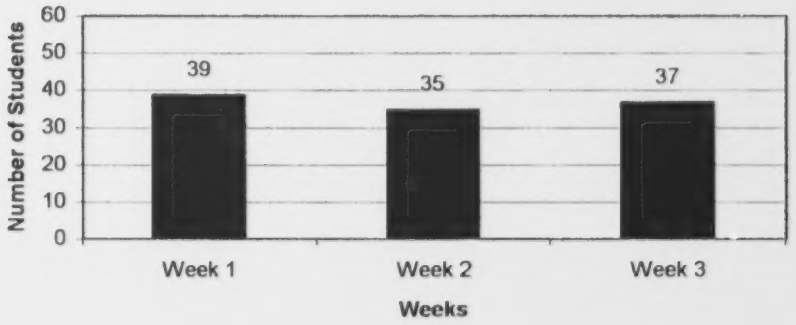
In order to document evidence of a deficiency in reading motivation, the researchers charted students' frequency of completing a reading log, recorded anecdotal records through the use of a tally sheet, analyzed student interest surveys, and evaluated teacher opinion surveys.

Reading Log Documentation

In order to document the number of students completing and returning reading logs, a sticker recording chart was the method of record completed by the students in the classroom. A summary of percentages of students turning in reading logs (found in Appendix E) for a three-week period, beginning the week of September 9 through September 27, is presented in the figure below.

Figure 1

Percentage of Students Completing and Returning Reading Logs (n=68)



Reading Choice Tally Sheet

In order to document the number of students who are motivated to choose reading as an activity when reading is one of four curriculum-based choices, a tally sheet was the method of record completed by the teachers/researchers as can be found in Appendix A. The students chose to read or complete an activity with a basis of mathematics, social studies, and/or science. Choices were given over a three-week period from September 9 through September 27. A summary of the percentages of choices is presented in the chart below.

Figure 2

Percentage of Students Choosing Reading and Other Activities (n=68)

Of the 18 occurrences for a three-week period, three times per week, beginning September 9 and concluding on September 27, 2002, 30% (n=20) of the students chose to read, while 70% (48) of the students chose another activity with a curricular base as opposed to reading.

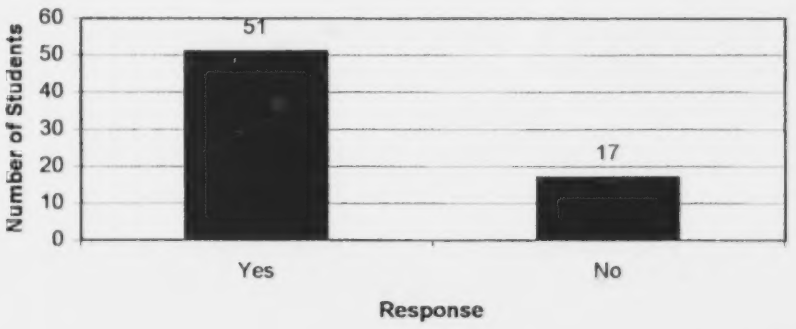
Student Interest Survey

Seventy students in the fourth grade classrooms of the teachers/researchers were asked to complete a Books and Novels Survey the week of September 9, 2002 as can be found in Appendix B. Sixty-eight of the 68 students returned the survey giving the

researchers a 100% return rate. This documentation gave the researchers valuable information concerning the students' exposure to reading and its importance. It also revealed how often they read, what genres of reading were enjoyed, and how often resources where students could borrow books for reading were used. The results of these findings are presented in the following figures.

Figure 3

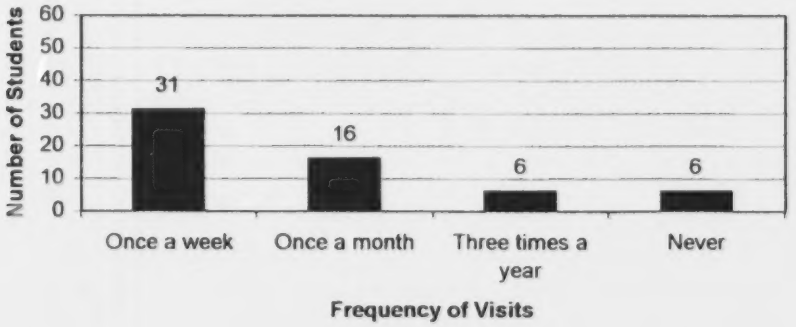
Do You Like To Read? (n=68)



Of the 68 students surveyed, 51 students (75%) reported they liked to read and 17 (25%) related they did not like to read. The majority of students surveyed enjoyed reading.

Figure 4:

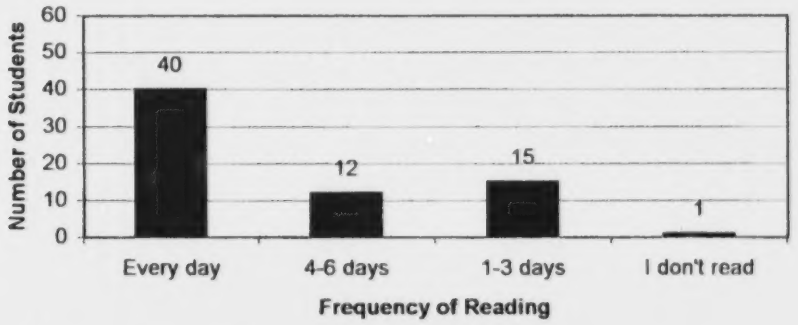
How Often Do You Go To the Library? (n=59)



Of the 68 students surveyed, 59 students answered this question. Of the 59 students who responded, 31 (53%) students stated they go to the library once a week. Sixteen students (27%) go to the library once a month; six students (10%) go to the library three times a year; six (10%) students reported they never go to the library.

Figure 5:

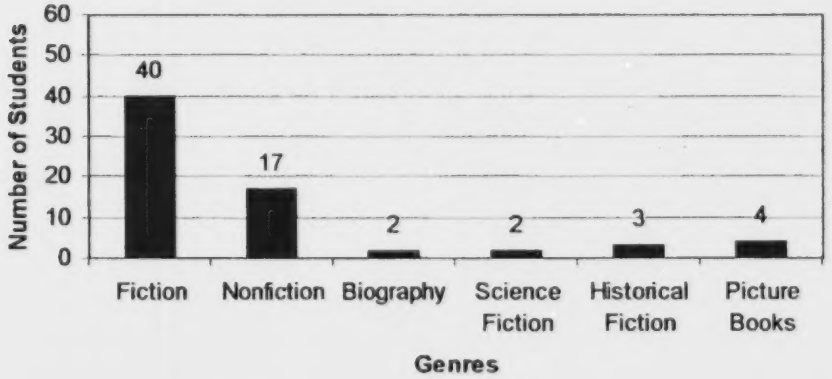
How Many Days Per Week Do You Read? (n=68)



Of the 68 students surveyed, 40 (59%) said they read every day; 12 (18%) said they read from four to six days per week; 15 (22%) read one to three days per week; one student (1%) professes not to read at all.

Figure 6:

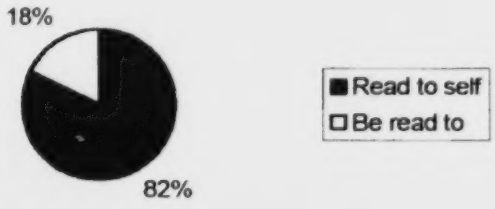
What Type of Books Do You Enjoy Reading Most? (n=68)



Of the 68 students surveyed, 40 (59%) enjoy reading fiction books. Seventeen (25%) of the students enjoy reading nonfiction; two students (3%) enjoy reading biography; two students (3%) enjoy reading science fiction; three students (4%) enjoy reading historical fiction; four students (6%) enjoy picture books.

Figure 7:

Would You Rather Read to Yourself or Have Someone Read to You? (n=67)



Of the 68 students surveyed, one student did not respond. Of the 67 students who answered this question, 55 (82%) would rather read to themselves, while only 12 (18%) preferred to be read to.

Figure 8:

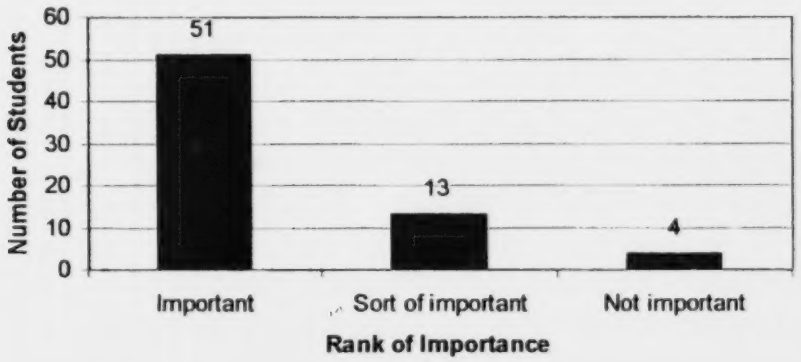
Do You Have a Favorite Author? (n=60)

Of the 68 students surveyed, eight did not respond. Of the 60 responses, 29

students (48%) have a favorite author, and 31 students (52%) did not have a favorite author.

Figure 9:

Reading Importance (n=68)



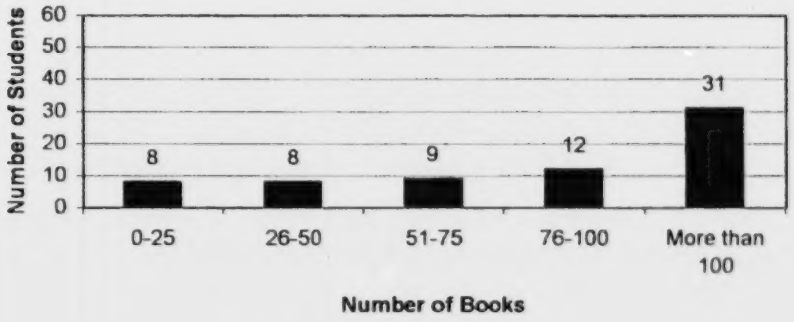
Of the 68 students surveyed, 51 (75%) believe reading is important; 13 students (19%) rank reading as sort of important; four students (6%) consider reading as not important.

Figure 10:

Have You Ever Listened to a Book on Tape? (n=68)

Of the 68 students surveyed, 45 students (66%) have listened to a book on tape, and 23 students (34%) have never listened to a book on tape.

Figure 11:



How Many Books Do You Own? (n=68)

Eight students (12%), out of 68, stated they own 0-25 books; eight students (12%) own 26-50 books; nine students (13%) own 51-75 books; twelve students (18%) own 76-100 books; 31 students (45%) own more than 100 books.

Based on the results of the student survey, most students enjoyed reading with almost half of the selected population visiting the library once a week. Fifty-nine percent of the students surveyed read everyday, and enjoy reading mostly fiction selections. Two out of three students have read a book on tape, and 46% of the students surveyed own more than 100 books.

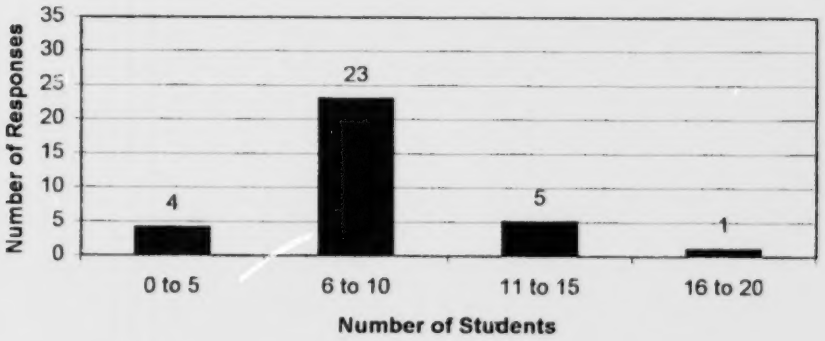
Teacher Opinion Surveys

In order to gather evidence from our colleagues to support our inquiry of student reading motivation, a questionnaire was sent to 33 fourth grade teachers as can be found in Appendix C. The teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it to the researchers by September 9, 2002. Of the 33 questionnaires sent out, 100% were

returned. The average class size of the teachers responding to the questionnaire was 22.75. The results are shown in the following figures.

Figure 12:

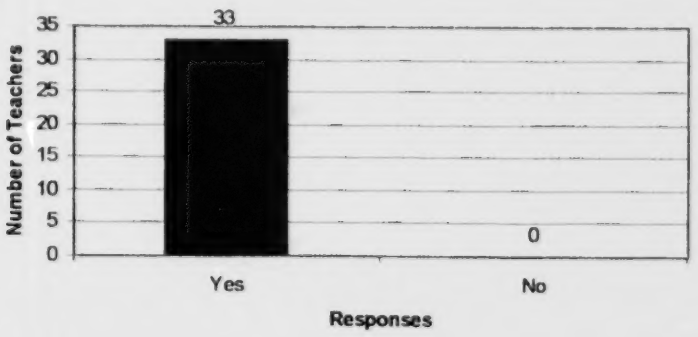
Teachers' Observations of Students Choosing Silent Reading (n=33)



Of the 33 questionnaires, four teachers (12%) stated that when given a choice of curriculum-based activities, 0-5 students chose silent reading. When given a choice of curriculum-based activities, 23 teachers (70%) said 6-10 students chose silent reading; five teachers (15%) noted 11-15 students chose silent reading; one teacher (3%) expressed 16-20 students chose silent reading. No teachers (0%) stated that zero students in his/her class would choose silent reading.

Figure 13:

Implementation of At-Home Reading Program (n=33)



Of the 33 teachers who responded, all (100%) implemented an at-home reading program in their classrooms.

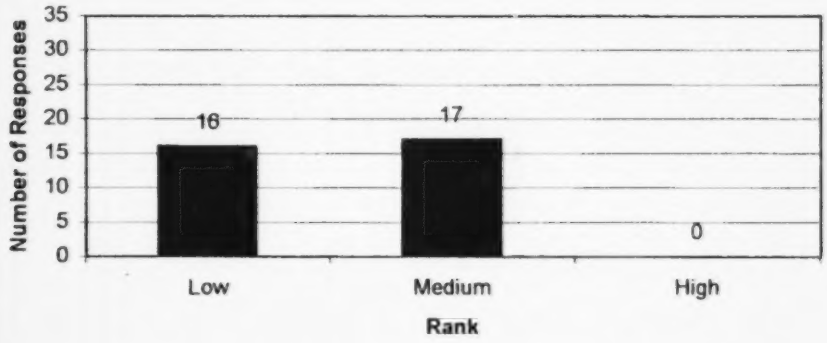
Figure 14:

Independent Reading Time Provision (n=33)

Twenty-five teachers (76%) provide independent reading time in their classrooms, while eight teachers (24%) did not.

Figure 15:

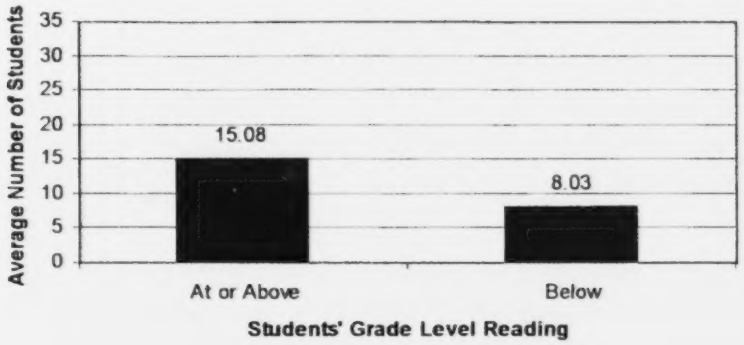
Overall Reading Motivation (n=33)



Teachers were asked to rank their students' overall reading motivation. Sixteen teachers (48%) catalogued their students with a low level of reading motivation; 17 teachers (52%) categorized their students with a medium level of reading motivation; zero teachers (0%) classified their students with a high level of reading motivation.

Figure 16:

Student Reading Level (n=33)



Teachers responding to the questionnaire were asked how many of their students are reading at or above grade level and how many of their students are reading below grade level. Of the 33 replies, 45 students in all and an average of 15.08 students in each class were reading at or above a fourth-grade reading level. Twenty-four students in all and an average of 8.03 students in each class are reading below a fourth-grade reading level.

The teachers who were polled all implemented an at-home reading program in their classrooms, and more than half of the teachers provided independent reading time in their classrooms. Teachers perceived more than half of their students within each classroom were reading at or above grade level, yet none of the teachers surveyed distinguish any of their students with high reading motivation.

Probable Causes

The literature suggests several underlying causes for a deficiency in reading motivation. The most prevalent of these are the lack of family literacy practices and exposure to a "book rich" environment, the lack of basic reading skills, and the lack of opportunities for

literacy activities. Most teachers acknowledge that the absence of motivation is at the heart of many of the academic problems we are faced with in education (Gambrell, 1996).

Juel's research shows that first grade children whose reading achievement is low and who are performing at the bottom of their class tend to remain in that position due to the continual failure they experience (as cited in Klesius & Griffith, 1996). Often these children are not unable to learn, but come from literacy deficient or economically disadvantaged homes where reading is not a priority for their parents. These homes might be characterized by varying cultural backgrounds and languages, varying degrees of literacy skills, exposure to the tools of literacy, and educational motivation. This type of environment can put a child at risks in the areas of literacy acquisition, oral language development, world knowledge, self-confidence, low motivation, and difficult classroom behavior (Roser, Hoffman, & Farest, 1990). Home and family connections, therefore, are vital in motivating children to read and develop basic skills.

Students who struggle with reading in the areas of word recognition, fluency, and decoding, develop a resistance to reading independently (Worthy, Patterson, Salas, Prater, & Turner, 2002). The results of a study done by Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1998) showed that half of the fifth-grade participants read for four minutes a day outside of school, and the other 50% read even less (as cited in Burns, 1999). "In 1984, John Goodlad found that students in kindergarten through sixth grade spent only 6% of their day actually reading, junior high students spent 3%, and high school students spent 2%" (Burns, 1999, p. 132). It was further determined that as much as 70% of reading instruction time was spent doing reading worksheets. Reading teachers commonly expect

students beginning at the fourth grade level to have mastered these basic skills so that they may then begin to implement higher-order thinking skills such as knowledge application and transfer. A lack of basic reading skills can prevent children from comprehending and make higher level skills unattainable. This lack of comprehension can undermine a student's confidence and cause their personal expectations to be low. The expectation that text will not make sense seems to override the student's sense-making strategies that would normally guide them around difficult text and vocabulary (Langer, 1992). Reading instruction needs to strike a balance between strategies for comprehending meaningful text and strategies for decoding (National Education Association, *Reading Matters: Text*, n.d.). If students have the necessary basic skills to comprehend what they are reading, they can then perceive their learning as relevant and transfer it to other situation. This learning then becomes a meaningful motivator to increase that skill (Ngeow, n.d).

One of the major keys to motivation is the active involvement of students in their own learning (Harris, 1991). According to the literature, however, literacy activities within the classroom are becoming more and more obsolete. Teachers are pressured with increasing demands during their instructional times that reading aloud to children is something they enjoyed, but could not always luxuriate in it (Roser, Hoffman, & Farest, 1990). Typical classroom settings focus on teacher-directed reading and offer little opportunity to read or discuss materials of their own choosing (Carlsen & Sherrill's study as cited in Worthy, 2002). Teachers who use the large-group format with the teacher up front are hindering students from sharing individual opinions and the recalling of personal experiences. When reflection time is rushed, and students sense the urgency,

they are not as likely to share their opinions as they are to give the answer they think the teacher is looking for (Langer, 1992). The objective in all classrooms should be the sharing of literature with children in a relaxed and open way. This sharing should include offering a sundry of books, encouraging volunteer reading, and helping children to discover their own connections (Roser, Hoffman, & Farest, 1990). Having a variety of reading genres and reading levels alone does not promote reading motivation. Children have different backgrounds, different abilities and levels of achievement, different styles of learning, different motivations, and even different languages (Burns, 1999). A diverse reading program with an assortment of materials and the opportunity to read for enjoyment purposes only may greatly improve the chances of motivating every student (Krashen's study as cited in Towell, 2001).

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

The literature review provides a wealth of information about solutions to the problem of deficiency in reading motivation. Common themes that permeate the literature are that increasing literary interest and building self-esteem by improving basic skills should develop motivation. It is important for educators to view themselves as motivators; motivation is an integral part of keeping students active members of the classroom reading community (Towell, 2001 and Burns, 1999).

A motivating educator is one who exposes students to a variety of literary genres and encourages them to share what they read with others. A motivating educator includes students in the decision making about what they read and provide them with literature related activities. Students in this environment are made to feel competent as readers no matter what their level of ability (Gambrell, 1996). One of the strategies that the literature supports in the area of motivation is called bibliotherapy. Simply stated, bibliotherapy can be defined as the use of books to help people solve problems. "Another, more precise definition is that bibliotherapy is a family of technique [sic] for structuring interaction between a facilitator and a participant based on mutual sharing of literature" (Pardeck, 1989 as cited in Aiex, 1993, p. 1). Bibliotherapy is a multifaceted intervention that may be used for many reasons. Some of these reasons are to help students develop self-confidence as learners, to increase the understanding of their behavior or motivations, to provide a way for them to find interests outside of themselves, and to help students plan a constructive course of action for broadening their

reading interests (Aiex, 1993). It is through literature that students increase their interests and pleasure in reading. Reluctant readers need teachers to break many of the emotional barriers that prevent them from developing and interest in reading by providing an environment rich in bibliotherapeutic literature, encouragement, and teacher generated enthusiasm (Ouzts, 1994). Parents of reluctant readers can also benefit from encouragement, enthusiasm, and exposure to literature (Harris, 1991). If teachers share their excitement about literature with parents and impress upon them the benefits to their children, parents can then work in partnership with teachers to spread this enthusiasm to the children (Allington & Guice, n.d.). With a teacher's caring guidance and a parent's well-intended recommendation, children turn to books that reflect their interests and capture their emotions (Johnson & Giorgis, 2002).

The challenge of motivating students to read goes beyond the teacher/parent partnership. It also involves creating a literate environment by infusing quality literature and related instructional strategies with a traditional reading and language arts program. A literate environment is a place where there are good books to share that reflect the interest of students. It is a place where students are challenged to make life/literature connections and are given the opportunity to respond to literature in a variety of ways (Roser, Hoffman, & Farest, 1990). When a student has the experience of connecting to a book, they begin to exhibit a curiosity in the subject and become open to further exploration. Their motivation becomes intrinsic and their learning becomes meaningful (Miller, 1998).

There are a number of strategies that can help students reach the levels of interest that would motivate them to explore further. One of these strategies is buddy reading,

which is excellent for scaffolding reading tasks. Part one of the buddy reading strategy involves pairing two students together to read a selection. As one reads aloud, the other reads along. This allows both students to read aloud far more than whole class reading. Most students love to read aloud but even those who do not are more comfortable doing it one-on-one. Part two of this strategy is the answering of comprehension questions that can be generated by the students or the teacher. Students enjoy sharing their opinions (Blue Ribbon Schools, n.d.). Another strategy that allows students to discuss what they have read is called book buddies. A book buddy system pairs students for extended periods of time to discuss books they are reading independently. This approach can develop the skills and interests of both learners thus boosting their motivation to read. Book buddies supports readers who struggle by exposing them to reading genres that they otherwise would not choose to read or be able to comprehend. Opportunities to talk about and think about books may raise interest levels to a degree that can help readers overcome difficult text (Burns, 1999, Allington & Guice, n.d.). Choral reading is another strategy that can be used to de-emphasize the performance aspects of reading orally in the classroom. During choral reading, all readers in the group read aloud together elevating the comfort level of reluctant readers. Instructional practice such as this that help students to transfer meaning needs to take place in a safe environment that encourages reflective discussions in small and large group setting (Cantrell, 1999). One of the major keys to motivation is the active involvement in their own learning. When a student is an active member in classroom experiences, their attitude towards success in reading is strongly affected (Towell, 2001).

The attitude and interest of the reader play an important part in skill development. Skill development is a motivator because as skill develops, frustration decreases, and confident increases (Burns, 1999). Motivation comes as students develop confidence in their ability to glean meaning from print. Reading skills are no longer defined as simplistically as applying phonics and using contexts. These skills are certainly important, but equally as important is the ability to comprehend. Comprehension is essentially a mental construction of what is on the page and how it relates to what is already known. Teachers must show students that what they read can be connected to self, friends, community, and world issues (Robb, n.d.). Motivated, effective readers employ a variety of comprehension strategies to guide them through literature and text. By teaching students these strategies, teachers help them grow from dependent to independent learners (McWhirter, McWhirter, McWhirter, & McWhirter, 1993).

Reading strategies are usually the focus during language arts, but they can be taught in any content area that is accompanied by text. Strategies should be taught that could be used prior to reading, during reading, and after reading. Prior to reading students should learn to connect background information and prior knowledge to unfamiliar concepts, content, and vocabulary. During reading, comprehension should be regularly monitored. After reading strategies should include ways of stating main ideas, retelling important information, and organizing ideas into patterns (Myers, 1996).

The interaction between the text and the reader make up the elements of reading. Thus, the attitude and interest of the reader are important factors. Teachers are interested more than ever to understand the relationship between reading motivation and achievement in students (Gambrell, 1996).

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of an increased exposure to literature and literature-based activities, during the period of September 9, 2002 to November 22, 2002, the fourth grade students from the targeted classes will improve their reading motivation in all content areas, as measured by student survey results and activity choice results.

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes were necessary:

1. A suggested book list will be created for home use.
2. Book talks will be created and implemented in the classroom to emphasize discussion between students in a variety of settings (i.e. pairs, small groups, and whole class).
3. Buddy and choral reading activities will be exercised.

Project Action Plan

Week 1
August 26-August 30
- Xerox teacher surveys for distribution
- Xerox tally sheets for teacher use
- Xerox novel reflections for student use
- Buy envelopes for teacher surveys

Week 2
September 2-September 6
- Introduce teacher survey at a faculty meeting
- Distribute teacher surveys with envelopes into fourth grade teacher mailboxes
- Teacher/researchers meet at a designated site to compare and analyze data

Week 3
September 9-September 13
- Introduce students to activity choice time (9/9)
- Begin observing and tallying choices (9/11)
- Introduce and model novel reflections (9/10)
- Begin novel reflections (9/12)

- Administer STAR throughout the week
- Choral reading and buddy reading mini-lesson
- Students take an interest survey
- Chart reading logs
- Discuss interest survey results and how it will help them to choose a variety of reading genres

Week 4
September 16-September 20
- Continue observing and tallying choices
- Continue novel reflections
- Continue choral and buddy reading
- Conference with each student about STAR results
- Students begin to choose books at their reading level according to STAR results
- Chart reading logs

Week 5
September 23-September 27
- Collect teacher surveys
- Complete observations and tally choices
- Complete and collect novel reflections
- Remove identifiers from novel reflections
- Teacher/researchers meet at a designated site to compare and analyze data
- Continue choral and buddy reading
- Chart reading logs
- Continue novel reflections

Week 6
September 30-October 4
- Continue choral and buddy reading
- Teach the process of book buddies
- Choose a book buddy
- Introduce current events activity (basic skills)
- Continue novel reflections

Week 7
October 7-October 11
- Continue choral and buddy reading
- Continue with book buddies

Week 8
October 14-October 18
- Continue choral and buddy reading
- Continue with book buddies
- Begin current events activities
- Bibliotherapy mini-lesson

- Continue novel reflections

Week 9
October 21-October 25
- Continue choral and buddy reading
- Continue with book buddies
- Continue current events activities
- Begin bibliotherapy through use of children's annotated bibliography
- Reinstate tally sheets three times a week
- Continue novel reflections
- Chart reading logs

Week 10
October 28-November 1
- Continue novel reflections
- Reassess reading levels using STAR
- Chart reading logs

Week 11
November 4-November 8
- Continue tally sheets
- Continue novel reflections
- Re-administer student interest survey
- Chart reading logs

Week 12
November 11-November 15
- Compare and evaluate data

Week 13
November 18-November 22
- Share data results with researchers

Methods of Assessment

In an attempt to motivate students to read, the researchers created literature rich classrooms by expanding on classroom libraries and implementing a variety of interactive reading activities. In order to gauge to success of the intervention strategies, the researchers developed reading tally sheets (that were used both before interventions took place and after) to record student choices during activity choice time. This will be measured by an improvement in reading motivation, interest, and frequency. Another

method of assessment was the implementation of reading interest surveys that were also done both before and after the reading interventions.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to increase the level of reading motivation in three fourth grade classes by implementing a variety of reading activities and strategies. The students level of motivation was determined by a student reading interest survey, by monitoring the options selected during activity choice time, and by recording the number of regularly turned in reading logs.

During the weeks of September 9 through September 13 and November 4 through November 8 students were asked to complete a student reading interest survey. This tool was used at the beginning to give the researchers a baseline for determining the students' motivational levels, levels of reading concern, and preferred literary genres. At the end it was used to measure the degrees of change in the above mentioned areas.

Upon collecting the baseline survey data and comparing the results from all three classrooms, the researchers observed that biographies were one of the genres of lowest interest. Over the course of the next week, the researchers told their students about a famous person they admire and asked each student to do the same. Brief discussions about each person took place first thing each morning at a rate of about five per day. Students were told to tell why they admired the person and asked if they would like to know more about the person. Without knowing what their assignment would be, all of the students responded positively. The researchers then explained that on the next class library day each student would make one of their selections a biography. They would

have two weeks to read the biography and then choose the way in which they would present the book to the class.

Despite the students' initial lack of enthusiasm for this assignment, the outcome was encouraging. The researchers had hoped that the prereading discussions and freedom to choose their biography would spark the students' interests. But it was not until they had been reading for a few days that their enthusiasm took an uphill turn. The creativity of the presentations and the amount of information about each person that was retained were indicators that the students had become interested (through the course of this activity) in biographies. What the researchers found interesting was the fact that the measurement survey did not reflect the enthusiasm that they thought it would. There was an increased interest in reading biographies, but it was not as significant as expected.

The Book Buddies activity began during the week of September 30 through October 4 and was continued for the length of the project. The purpose of this tool was to increase at-home independent reading.

Over the course of a six week period, students who completed their independent at home reading requirements and turned in their reading logs (found in Appendix E) on Monday morning were given time to share their book with a Book Buddy. It was the hope of the researchers that the weekly opportunity for a time of interactive book sharing would boost the motivation of reluctant readers thereby increasing the percentage of reading logs returned. The reading log itself is a record of at home reading, but it is valuable in that it requires parent signatures that hopefully spark their involvement. When students read at home they record the date, title, and amount of time read. Then

they have a parent sign for verification. Students and parents are encouraged at this time to discuss what the student read.

The struggle at school is getting students to bring in their reading logs. It is difficult to enforce because giving consequences for not reading attaches a negative feeling to reading. The researchers felt if we were going to encourage and motivate students to choose reading as an activity, we must associate it with positive feeling.

As a result of this intervention, the number of students returning reading logs increased 26%. The students were given generic discussion questions (found in Appendix F) to jump-start their book chats which seemed to work well. The exciting part of this intervention was when they students took it to another level. After a few weeks they began extending the conversations beyond the questions. They began to try selling their book to their buddy. "You should take this book out of the library next because . . ." The students were using information obtained through discussion to point out why other books would interest their book buddy. In the area of reading motivation, this activity exceeded the researchers' expectations.

The researchers began implementing novel reflections (found in Appendix G) during the week of September 9 through September 13 and ended the week of November 11 through November 15. The purpose of this intervention was to help students develop their skills in the areas of story elements comprehension.

Each time students engaged in a period of sustained silent reading, they were given a novel reflection sheet. The researchers would choose a story element for the students to focus on for that session and then discuss with the class the student's reflections. The length and development of the answers given measured improvement.

Although this form of measurement is subjective, the improvement in this reading skill was evident to the researchers. It was this intervention that prompted them to develop and begin implementing a variety of reading strategy sheets that they began to use across the curriculum.

Another skill development intervention took the form of a current event activity (found in Appendix H). This activity was developed by the researchers to increase student's vocabulary. Each student was given a current events graphic organizer sheet and assigned a date for presenting their current event. The directions given to the students were that they could choose any newspaper, magazine, journal, or periodical and to get the most current issue. Another requirement was that each student chose three unfamiliar words from their article. First, they were to write their own definition of each word using a content clue reading strategy. Next, they would compare their definition to the dictionary definition, and then teach these words to the class as a part of their current event presentation. Before the oral presentation, the class would add the three words and definitions to their vocabulary journals.

Toward the end of the researchers' intervention cycle, they began to notice students making vocabulary connections as they read in all content areas. It became clear that developing a larger vocabulary was giving them a sense of confidence.

Two of the reading strategies that were implemented by the researchers proved to be even more advantageous than expected. One of these was choral reading. It was the hope that this type of reading would boost the confidence of low readers, and it seemed to do that. The added and unexpected benefits, however, were that student's fluency was helped by the cadence of the higher level readers and all students remained focused on

what was being read. When individuals read aloud as others follow along, some of those following along tend to wander off and lose focus. This limits the amount of information they receive and their amount of reading practice.

The other strategy that exceeded our expectations was buddy reading. This was implemented for the purpose of confidence building and more frequent practice time. The added benefit turned out to be that the higher reader of the pair took on the role of peer tutor. They seemed to do this quite naturally and willingly. They helped in the areas of word recognition and comprehension. The researchers found this to be the pattern in all three classes and have continued both of these strategies as a result.

The researchers biggest obstacle was the STAR test. This system had technical problems from day one, and ultimately was never a usable tool. This was very disappointing. It was the hope of the researchers that by determining the students' reading levels early; the students could start reading the appropriate level of books and begin the process of reading skill improvement on the right foot. Once the researchers were certain this tool would not be available, they began doing individual oral inventories with their students in an attempt to guide them in the right direction. This process involved having students read the first two pages of books at a variety of levels and assessing frustration levels. Our library books have color coded stickers on the spines which denote the reading level of that book. This was surely not as accurate an assessment as the STAR test, but researchers felt that it was a start.

One strategy used by the researchers to motivate the students to read a variety of literary genres was to expose them to the term bibliotherapy. The annotated bibliography (found in Appendix D) was introduced and discussed. The book summaries were read

and copies of the books were handed out for the students to look over. A special shelf was allocated for these books, making it easier for the students to find and check out. Often time, students can identify with the characters of the story. Through bibliotherapy, students can reach out and select a piece of literature to connect them with their own behaviors, interests, and real life experiences. Also the book, Because of Winn-Dixie was read aloud to the class with time to reflect after each reading by writing in their personal journals. The students opened up and were able to share what they had written. This motivated the children to seek other pieces of bibliotherapeutic literature.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess evidence of an increase in reading motivation, the researchers charted and compared students' frequency of completing a reading log, recorded and compared anecdotal records through the use of a tally sheet, and analyzed student interest surveys after interventions.

Reading Log Documentation

In order to assess the number of students completing and returning reading logs, a sticker recording chart was continually and consistently completed by the students in the classroom. A summary of percentages of students turning in reading logs for a three-week period beginning the week of October 21 and ending the week of November 4, 2002 is presented in the table below.

Table 7:

Percentage of Students Completing and Returning Reading Logs (n=68)

Weeks	Percentage of Students Pre-Intervention	Percentage of Students Post-Intervention
1	58	78
2	52	81
3	54	83
3-Week Average	55	81

Through the analysis of the Reading Log Documentation, the researchers found an overall increase of students completing and returning reading logs by approximately 26%.

Reading Tally Sheet

In order to assess the effects of book talks and the motivation to read in the classroom, a reading tally sheet of reading and choice activities was reinstated after the intervention and can be found in Appendix A. The students chose to read or complete an activity with a basis of mathematics, social studies, and/or science. Choices were given over a three-week period from October 21 through November 8, 2002. A summary of the percentages of choices is presented in the table below.

Table 8:

Percentage of Students Choosing Reading and Other Activities

Activity Choice	Percentage of Students Pre-Intervention	Percentage of Students Post-Intervention
Reading	30	34
Other Activities	70	66

Of the 18 occurrences for a three-week period, three times per week, beginning October 21 through November 8, 2002, 34% (n=308) of the students chose to read, while

66% (n=159) of the students chose another activity with a curricular base opposed to reading.

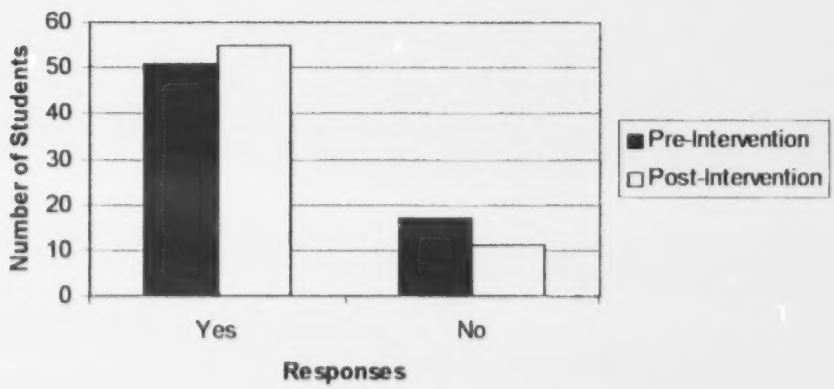
Through the analysis of the choice activities, the researchers found after intervention a 4% increase of students choosing to read rather than an activity with another curricular base.

Student Interest Survey

Sixty-eight students in the fourth grade classrooms of the teachers/researchers were asked to complete a Books and Novels Survey (as can be found in Appendix B) the week of November 4, 2002. Sixty-six of the 68 students returned the survey giving the researchers a 97% return rate. This documentation gave the researchers valuable information concerning the students' exposure to reading and its importance. It also revealed how often they read, what genres of reading were enjoyed, and how often resources where students could borrow books for reading were used. The results of these findings and the pre-intervention documents are presented in the following figures.

Figure 17:

Do You Like To Read?

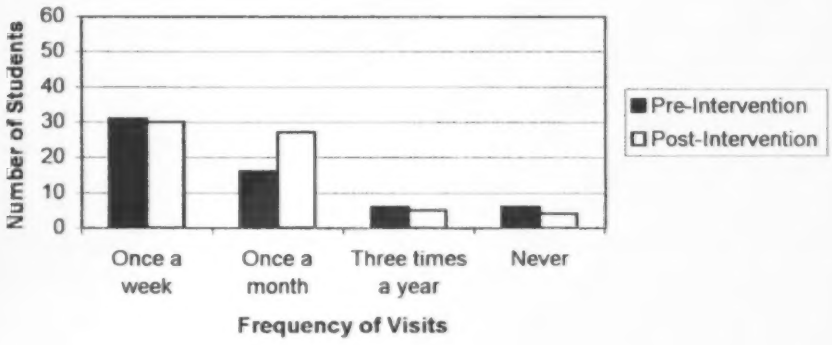


Of the 66 students surveyed post intervention, 55 students (83%) reported they liked to read and 11(17%) related they did not like to read. The majority of students surveyed enjoyed reading.

Through the analysis of the survey, the researchers found an insignificant increase in the amount of students who like to read. The number of students who like to read increased by four responses (66%) after intervention.

Figure 18:

How Often Do You Go To the Library?

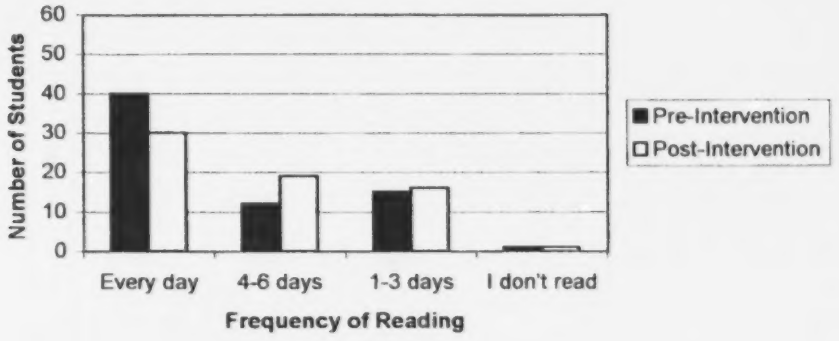


Of the 66 students surveyed, 30 students (45%) stated they go to the library once a week; 27 students (41%) noted they go to the library once a month; five students (8%) said they go to the library three times a year; four students (6%) reported they never go to the library.

The researchers found the results pre- and post-intervention were nearly identical in the number of responses of students going to the library once a week, three times a year, and never. After intervention, more students (17%) visited the library once a month.

Figure 19:

How Many Days Per Week Do You Read?



Of the 66 students surveyed, 27 (42%) students said they read every day; 19 students (31%) believed they read from four to six days per week; 16 (25%) read one to three days per week; one students (2%) concedes not to read at all. Through the analysis of the survey, the researchers found the students reading frequency when reading 4-6 days and 1-3 days improved by 13% and 3% respectively. The percentage of students reading everyday decreased by 17%.

Table 9:

What Type Of Books Do You Enjoy Reading Most?

Genre	Percentage of Students Pre-Intervention	Percentage of Students Post-Intervention	Change
Fiction	59%	60%	+1%
Nonfiction	25%	26%	-1%
Picture Books	6%	5%	-1%
Historical Fiction	4%	3%	-1%
Biography	3%	6%	+3%
Science Fiction	3%	0%	-3%

Of the 66 students surveyed, 60% (n=40) enjoy reading fiction books; 26% (n=17) enjoy reading nonfiction; 6% (n=4) enjoy reading biography books; 5% (n=3) of

students enjoy picture books the most; 3% (n=2) enjoy reading historical fiction; no students enjoy reading science fiction. The researchers found that students' interests adjusted slightly after interventions. Fewer students chose science fiction for enjoyment and more students chose fiction for enjoyment.

Table 10:

Would You Rather Read To Yourself Or Have Someone Read To You?

Response	Percentage of Students Pre-Intervention	Percentage of Students Post-Intervention
Read to Self	82%	80%
Be Read to	18%	20%

Of the 66 students surveyed, 53 (80%) would rather read to themselves, while 13 (20%) preferred to be read to. The researchers found that students' preferred method of reading varied insignificantly after interventions.

Table 11:

Do You Have A Favorite Author?

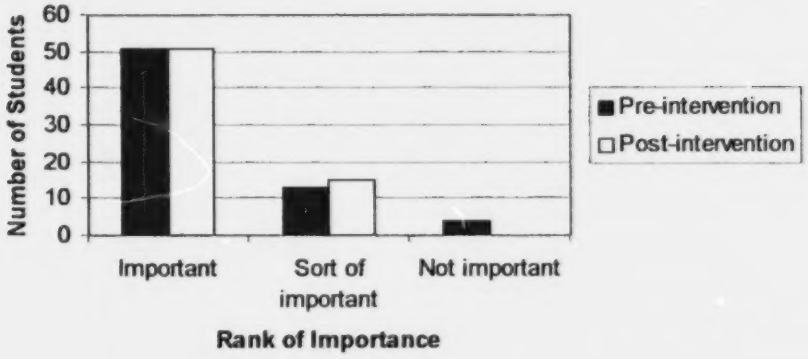
Response	Percentage of Students Pre-Intervention	Percentage of Students Post-Intervention
Yes	48%	41%
No	52%	59%

Of the 66 students surveyed, 27 (59%) have a favorite author, and 39 students (41%) did not have a favorite author.

Through analysis of the survey, the researchers found that students slightly changed their view. After intervention, fewer students had a favorite author.

Figure 20:

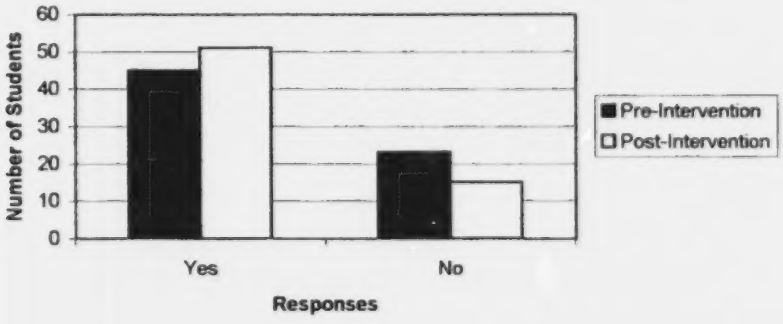
Reading Importance



Of the 66 students surveyed, 51 believe reading is important; 15 students rank reading as sort of important; no students considered reading not important. The researchers found students' belief of the importance of reading changed insignificantly after intervention. Students who perceived reading as not important before intervention, distinguish reading as sort of important or important after intervention.

Figure 21:

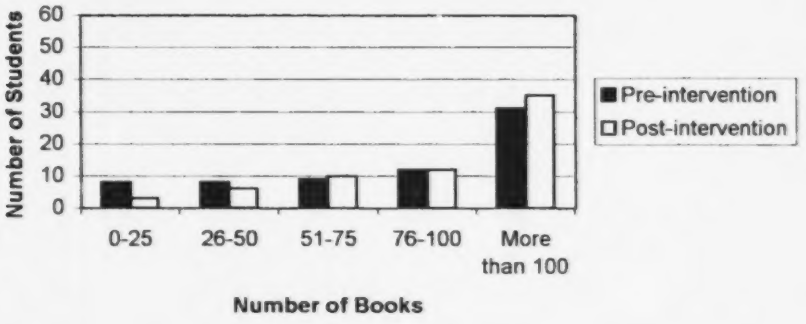
Have You Ever Listened to a Book on Tape?



Of the 66 students surveyed, 51 students (77%) have listened to a book on tape, and 15 students (23%) have never listened to a book on tape. The researchers found more students listened to a book on tape. After intervention, six more students listened to a book on tape.

Figure 22:

How Many Books Do You Own?



Three students (5%), out of 66, stated they own 0-25 books; six students (9%) own 26-50 books; ten students (15%) own 51-75 books; twelve students (18%) own 76-100 books; 35 students (53%) own more than 100 books. The survey, the researchers found that 7% more students own more than 100 books after interventions.

Conclusions and Recommendations

When analyzing the results of the students completing and returning the weekly reading logs, the researchers found that the level of interest in reading increased. We felt that the book buddy incentive had positive results due to the fact that the children eagerly questioned and discussed their book with their friends. The children were able to show their pride in their reading ability and comprehension. Book buddies was an interview process with a peer to engage conversations and connections through discussions of their book. Sharing their understandings about the stories, they often told about themselves

and the personal connections that a reading selection offered them. They offered opinions and justifications for ideas. Research has demonstrated the social nature of learning. It is essential to provide opportunities for children to talk about what they are learning. Observations from the researchers found that the children's level of responsibility for learning increased when conversation and genuine dialogue replaced the traditional comprehension questions. The researchers recommend this incentive program. We were thrilled to experience the enthusiasm on Monday mornings when the students returned their reading logs and were given the opportunity to interview with a peer. It proved to be a strategy that should continue throughout the year.

Informational text, such as newspapers, television guides, maps, cookbooks, and magazines are all part of our culture. To assist learners in becoming reflective and strategic readers of informational text, it is helpful to remember that reading strategies can be taught in all texts. The researchers found that reading activities such as current events helped the students learn how to effectively process information while deepening their personal enjoyment for reading. The change of venue from a book to current news articles broadened their vocabulary and opened connections to world knowledge. Each student was assigned a week to read an article of choice and be prepared to summarize the article and teach three new vocabulary words to the class. The students were asked to write their own definition of each of the words using a content clue reading strategy. Then they compared their definition to the dictionary definition. Finally, the students shared their new vocabulary words with their peers. The researchers observed the students showing a more confident attitude when reading in a content area. They learned how to utilize their own prior knowledge regarding the topic and to apply a wide range of

metacognitive strategies for defining the meaning while seeking information. It would be recommended by the researchers to continue this type of reading activity throughout the year. Besides the increased new vocabulary, the students learned to use cues from visual supports such as photographs, charts and diagrams. Their understanding of expository material deepened. Students teaching the lesson created a personal interpretation of the information. The researchers observed the student/teacher demonstrating their knowledge orally with a lot of enthusiasm. They also observed the student/teacher becoming more comfortable and focused on teaching the information in a meaningful way rather than simply answering questions.

The researchers agreed that they would not continue the activity choice intervention as directed in this research. This activity was usually at the end of the day and choices varied with either a chance to read or another activity with a basis of math, social studies, and/or science. Instead, learning centers would be established in each of the classrooms with all of these activity choices to be used when the students were finished with their seatwork. The researchers found there was only a four percent increase of the students choosing to read than another activity. All classes even had a grade level reading incentive program in place but still there was not a significant increase with the reading choice.

The pre and post student reading interest survey was an excellent tool to determine the students' preferred literary genres and reading motivational levels. This tool gave the researchers a true picture of their students' viewpoint of reading. We were encouraged with the growth of their interest toward reading, the frequency of their reading, and the number of books they read. We would recommend using this tool every

quarter to reassess the students' interest level. Teachers could then use this tool to prepare lessons, such as the exposure to biographies, within their classrooms to broaden their students' reading horizon.

The researchers conclude that it is necessary to create an environment that will provide opportunities for children to read and talk about their learning. We believe a motivating educator provides students with quality literature and encouragement to read and reflect. Throughout our year of research we have experienced an excitement in our classrooms for reading more than in the past. One of our greatest gifts we offered our students was to help them find their own voices as readers by completing the novel reflections, buddy reading, choral reading and the book buddy interview. We have allowed our students to show emotions and opinions without rebuke. The students have taken the responsibility for their own learning. We are thrilled with the learning atmosphere that we have created using the many new and motivational activities and will continue throughout our teaching careers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Reading Tally Sheet

for _____

Date	Number of Students Present	Students Choosing Reading Total	Students Choosing Other Activities ▪ Math ▪ Geography ▪ Journaling Total
		Total ____	Total ____

Appendix B

BOOKS AND NOVELS SURVEY
(Circle your answer.)

1. Do you like to read?
   YES NO

2. How often do you go to the library?
   ONCE A WEEK ONCE A MONTH

   THREE TIMES A YEAR NEVER

3. How many days per week do you read?
   I DON'T READ 1-3 DAYS 4-6 DAYS EVERY DAY

4. What type of books do you enjoy reading most?
   FICTION NONFICTION BIOGRAPHY

   SCIENCE FICTION HISTORICAL FICTION

   PICTURE BOOKS

5. Would you rather read to yourself of have someone read to you?
   READ TO SELF BE READ TO

6. Do you have a favorite author?
   YES NO

7. Do you think reading is
   IMPORTANT SORT OF IMPORTANT NOT IMPORTANT

8. Have you ever listened to a book on tape?
   YES NO

9. About how many books do you own?
   0-25 26-50 51-75 76-100 More than 100

Appendix C

Student Reading Interest Questionnaire

1. How many students are in your class? _____

2. When given a choice of activities, please circle approximately how many of your students choose silent reading?
   0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 more than 20

3. Do you implement an at-home reading program with your students?
   YES NO

4. Do you provide independent reading time in your classroom daily?
   YES NO

5. If the answer to number 4 is yes, how much time do you allow for silent reading? _____ minutes

6. How would you rank your students' overall reading motivation?
   LOW MEDIUM HIGH
   1 2 3

If you utilize STAR, please answer the following questions:

7. How many of your students are reading at or above grade level? _____

8. How many of your students are reading below grade level? _____

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to help us with our research!

Please return to the mailbox of Carrie Lubkeman or Kris Alden in the envelope provided.

Appendix D

Annotated Bibliography

Because of Winn-Dixie

DiCamillo, Kate. (2000). Because of Winn-Dixie. New York: Candlewick Press. This is a story of 10-year-old Opal who has just recently moved to Florida with her preacher father. Opal is dealing with the abandonment of her mother seven years earlier. Opal finds a dog, Winn-Dixie, who helps her deal with the loss of her mother and make friends in the offbeat town.

Bud Not Buddy

Curtis, Christopher Paul. (1991). Bud Not Buddy. New York: Delacorte Press. Ten-year-old Bud is motherless and on the run. It is 1936 in Flint. Michigan. His mother never told him who his father is, but he has some jazz flyers she left him before she passed away. Bud goes on the road to find the famous Herman E. Calloway who will lead him back to his family.

Crazy Lady

Conly, Jane Leslie. (1993). Crazy Lady. New York: Harper Trophy.
This is a touching story about a seventh grader named Vernon. Vernon lost his mother, the only person who he felt believed in him. Vernon seeks out a neighbor who is a retired teacher to tutor him in reading. In exchange, Vernon helps another neighbor with chores. He ends up befriending this neighbor, Maxine, and her son Ronald. Ronald, despite his cognitive disability, teaches Vernon the true meaning of friendship.

Our Only May Amelia

Holm, Jennifer L. (1999). Our Only May Amelia. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

May Amelia is growing up with her seven brothers. It is the year 1899 and May Amelia finally receives her wish of a little sister. The baby becomes ill, and May Amelia blames herself when the baby dies. May Amelia has to come to grips with her sorrow and resume her "tomboy" life.

Out of the Dust

Hesse, Karen. (1997). Out of the Dust. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

This story is beautifully told in free verse. It is a tale of a young girl, Billie Jo, in the Dust Bowl during the Depression. Billie Jo and her mother get terribly burned in a kerosene fire. Billie Jo's hands are burned and her mother dies shortly after childbirth. Billie Jo has a journey of forgiveness to travel before she can reconcile her relationship with her father and her music.

Shiloh

Reynolds Nayor, Phyllis. (1991). Shiloh. New York: Aladdin.

Eleven year-old Marty happens upon a stray dog that is the mistreated dog of a neighboring man. Marty faces ethical questions of hiding the dog or returning it to its abusive owner. Marty's problem creates a joyful ending to this animal lover's tale.

Ella Enchanted

Carson Levine, Gail. (1997) Ella Enchanted. New York: Harper Trophy.

At birth, Ella is cursed by a fairy that gives her a "gift" of obedience. Ella is imprisoned in a life of submission to her wicked stepmother and stepsisters. She is able to break her curse by almost sacrificing her life in order to save the kind and beloved prince.

A Girl Named Disaster

Farmer, Nancy. (1996). A Girl Named Disaster. New York: Puffin.

Nhamo's father is gone, and her mother has passed away. Nhamo's grandmother encourages her to run away to escape the planned marriage to a cruel man. She faces isolation, adventure, mystical spirits, illness, and dramatic and extraordinary challenges.

The Giver

Lowry, Lois. (1993). The Giver. New York: Bantam Doubleday Publishing Group.

This is a futuristic story of Jonas in a perfect society. When Jonas turns twelve, he is given the assignment of The Giver. He is to learn to be the historian of all emotion and memory. After learning the truth of the past, Jonas escapes from all he has known, taking his foster baby brother with him.

Holes

Sachar, Louis. (1998). Holes. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Stanley Yelnats is sent to Camp Green Lake after being accused of stealing a pair of famous sneakers being auctioned. Stanley learns that Camp Green Lake is not green, and it is very barren. The boys at the camp are put to work digging holes, as the warden is

searching for a treasure that Kissin' Kate Barlow left behind over one hundred years ago. The book moves between the history of Camp Green Lake and its present time. Stanley and Zero end up resolving the mystery of the treasure, as well as sending the warden to her due punishment.

Hope Was Here

Bauer, Joan. (2000). Hope Was Here. New York: Putnam Publishing Group. Sixteen year-old Hope is living with her aunt since her mother abandoned her when she was a baby. Hope has been working as a waitr5ess for two years and continues to do so when she and her aunt move to small town in Wisconsin. Their boss is stricken with leukemia. The two women help him, as he is recovering from his illness, as well as running for mayor of the town to defeat the corrupted present mayor.

Lily's Crossing

Reilly Giff, Patricia. (1997). Lily's Crossing. New York: Yearling Books. Ten year-old Lily lost her mother when she was a young child. She lives with her father and grandmother. It is 1944 and her father reveals he has joined the Army. When he leaves for the summer, Lily meets Albert who is a Nazi refugee. This is a heartwarming story of friendship and hope.

A Long Way From Chicago

Peck, Richard. (1998). A Long Way From Chicago. New York: Scholastic, Inc. Every summer for seven years, Joey and Mary Alice visit Grandma Dowdel in her rural Illinois town. Each chapter is filled with grandma's outrageous adventures with dirty tricks and cunning plots.

The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural

McKissack, Patricia C. (1992). The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural. New York: Scholastic.

This is a collection of tales rooted in African-American history that has been passed down through the generations of storytellers. The dark-thirty is the half hour just before nightfall when spine-tingling, hair-raising stories were told with family members gathered all around.

Dragon's Gate

Yep, Laurence. (1993). Dragon's Gate. New York: Harper Trophy.

This is a story of the Chinese immigrants' experience during the Western expansion in America. It is a 1800s tale filled with humor and heroism. Otter travels to America unexpectedly after killing a Manchu in China. He searches for his father and the truth to all of the stories he has been told.

Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery

Freedman, Russell. (1993). Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co.

This is a biography of Eleanor Roosevelt that captures her spirit and courage from her early childhood to her death. This is a sensitive portrayal of a woman with incredible achievements.

All-Star Reading Log
for Mrs. Lubkeman's Class

Name: _____Number:_____
Week of: _____

Date	Title of Book	Minutes

Total Minutes
_____

Parent Signature:_____

Appendix F

BOOK BUDDY INTERVIEW

1. What was interesting or exciting about what you read this week?		
2. Who is the main character?		
3. Describe your favorite character.		
4. Where does the story take place?		
5. When does the story take place?		
6. What is the problem or conflict in the story?		
7. How is the problem resolved?		
8. If you were the author, what would you have done differently?		
9. How would you respond to the situation if you were the character?		
10. How can you relate anything you've read in your story to your own life?		

Book Buddies Names _____

_____

BOOK BUDDY INTERVIEW

1. What was interesting or exciting about what you read this week?		
2. Who is the main character?		
3. Describe your favorite character.		
4. Where does the story take place?		
5. When does the story take place?		
6. What is the problem or conflict in the story?		
7. How is the problem resolved?		
8. If you were the author, what would you have done differently?		
9. How would you respond to the situation if you were the character?		
10. How can you relate anything you've read in your story to your own life?		

Book Buddies Names _____

_____

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Book Buddies Lesson Plan

Objectives: 1) Learners will be challenged and engaged in meaningful dialogue and conversation about texts.
2) Learners will monitor their own comprehension.

Materials: 1) Novel
2) "Book Buddy Interview"
3) Completed weekly reading log

Methods: 1) Students meet with a partner. Each partner has a copy of the interview. The set of questions helps the students to begin the conversation and dialogue by placing the responsibility of the retelling in the hands of the learner.
2) They share and compare, and through conversation, the readers deepen their understanding of the story.

Appendix G

Novel Reflections

Name _____ Title _____

Directions: Above each box, label the reading points that your teacher tells you to look for while reading.

	_____	_____	_____
Chapter _____			

	_____	_____	_____
Chapter _____			

	_____	_____	_____
Chapter _____			

	_____	_____	_____
Chapter _____			

Novel Reflection Lesson Plan

Objectives: 1) Help students draw and/or write what they remember about the key elements of a chapter.
2) Students will talk to other students about their reflection.

Materials: 1) Novel
2) Novel Reflections graphic organizer

Methods: 1) Introduce the organizer. Model the lesson by reading aloud a chapter from a book.
2) As class, write students' ideas in three boxes in the graphic organizer. The story elements will change with each chapter.
3) Retelling is a reflection tool. Students engaged in retelling must review all they know about the chapter; select key points that reflect the main ideas; consider key events, problem, solution, characters, and setting, then retell the information to the team.
4) If students have read the same selection, lively discussions about different interpretations can deepen their understanding of the story.

NAME & # _____ Date _____

CURRENT EVENTS

Magazine or Newspaper:

Title of Story:

Vocabulary Word:	Vocabulary Word:	Vocabulary Word:
_____	_____	_____
Definition:	Definition:	Definition:
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

In your opinion what made this article interesting?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Draw a picture that would go well with the title of this article.

Current Events Lesson Plan

Objectives: 1) Students will be able to identify periodicals and newspapers that interest them.
2) Students will be able to share an article from a journal, magazine, or newspaper that interests them.
3) Students will be able to find three vocabulary words in their article that are unfamiliar to them, locate the definitions, and teach those words to the class.

Materials: 1) Current issue of a periodical, or newspaper
2) Current Event sheet
3) Dictionary

Methods: 1) Discuss with students a variety of monthly, weekly, and daily publications.
2) Ask students to think about and make a list of subjects that interest them. Ask them to see if they can find a magazine, journal or newspaper that relates to any of those subjects at a newsstand, public library, or school library.
3) Give each student a copy of the Current Events sheet and have them follow along as you model a presentation for them.
4) Assign each student a date for presenting their current event.
5) On presentation day students will discuss their article using the Current Events sheet as a format, put the three vocabulary words and definitions on the board or overhead, and teach the words to the class while they write the words in their vocabulary journals.

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